

REPORT ON
THE 2009 YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY
FOR STUDENTS IN GRADES 9, 10, 11 AND 12
FOR THE
ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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INTRODUCTION

The Arlington Public Schools contracted with Northeast Health Resources (NHR) to carry out the tabulation and overview analysis of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) which was implemented with students in grades 9 through 12. The survey was primarily based on one developed specifically for high school students at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. The survey contains 119 questions. Students responded to questions which fall under general categories of risk behaviors including: safety, violence, gambling, stress, internet use, suicide, tobacco use, alcohol use, illegal drug use, HIV/AIDS education, sexual behavior, dietary behavior, physical activity, self-care, and helping resources.

Every other year, the Massachusetts Department of Education carries out a Youth Risk Behavior Survey for high school students from a cross-section of school systems in the state. The most recent state-wide survey for which data is currently available was carried out by the Department of Education in the Spring of 2007. The survey was administered to students from 59 randomly selected public high schools in the state.

An overview of the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey as well as a comparison with certain of the data from the 2007 Massachusetts YRBS are included herein. It should be noted that several questions in the Arlington YRBS are not part of the Massachusetts YRBS, and therefore no comparative data is available.

SURVEY PROCESS

It was agreed that the Youth Risk Behavior Survey would be distributed to all students in attendance on the survey date from grades 9, 10, 11 and 12. The survey was administered on December 15, 2009 simultaneously to all students by classroom teachers during homeroom period. Teachers were provided with written instructions, which were read to all students before taking the survey.

Once all of the surveys were completed, they were gathered and tabulated. There were a total of 1,027 students who responded to the survey, 283 from grade 9, 247 from grade 10, 259 from grade 11 and 234 from grade 12. There were 534 females and 487 males who responded to the survey. Six students did not indicate their gender and six students did not indicate their grade.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Frequencies of responses are reported for all items in the survey and cross-tabulations are provided for three demographic characteristics: grade, gender, and grade/gender. The results of the survey, including all cross-tabulations, are presented in percentages under separate cover. Please note that the data results were tabulated in percentages, rounded to the nearest tenth of one percent and not all percentages will total exactly 100 due to rounding and no responses in some cases.

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR FINDINGS

There is much important and relevant information to be found in an analysis of the tabulations of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey as taken by students from the Arlington Public Schools. This is true when one looks at the tabulations of all students taken as a group, and is especially so when one looks at the cross-tabulations by grade and gender.

With students having responded to 119 questions, much can be said about the responses to each of those questions. However, it is not the intention here to discuss the results of each question. Rather, it is the intention of this report to highlight certain of the results and to offer comparisons with the Arlington High School YRBS of 2007 and with data gathered from the implementation of the 2007 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey. It is hoped that the following as well as a more detailed analysis of the results of this survey, will assist the Arlington Public Schools and their Health Advisory Committee in their on-going development of health education curriculum.

HIGH SCHOOL - GRADES 9, 10, 11 AND 12

The following also includes comparisons with certain of the data from the 2007 MA YRBS. It should be noted that the report on the 2007 MA YRBS often only provides aggregate data on all students from grades 9 through 12 and not on the results from specific grades. Further, several questions in this survey are not included in the MA YRBS.

SAFETY

- **19.8%** of all respondents (18.2% - 2007) (26% - MA YRBS) **report having ridden in a car or other vehicle driven by someone who had been drinking alcohol** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey. The incidence of this experience was highest in grade 12 (grade 9 – 17.1%, grade 10 – 18.4%, grade 11 – 21.4%, grade 12 – 22.6%). There was very little variation by gender (females – 19.0%, males – 20.6%).
- **3.7%** of all respondents (7.2% - 2007) (11% - MA YRBS) **report having driven a car or other vehicle after they had been drinking alcohol** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey. Respondents from grade 12 (7.3%) were more likely to have done so (grade 9 – 1.1%, grade 10 – 2.0%, grade 11 – 5.1%) (females – 2.6%, males – 4.9%).
- **13.8%** of all respondents **report having been bullied or harassed during the past six months.** The incidence of this experience was highest in grade 11 (grade 9 – 13.9%, grade 10 – 14.0%, grade 11 – 15.6%, grade 12 – 11.5%). There was no variation by gender.

VIOLENCE RELATED BEHAVIORS

- **4.4%** of all respondents (5.7% - 2007) **report having carried a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property during the school day** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey (grade 9 – 3.6%, grade 10 – 2.4%, grade 11 – 8.2%, grade 12 – 3.4%). Males (6.8%) were much more likely to have carried a weapon on school property than were females (2.3%).
- **2.8%** of all respondents (3.3% - 2007) (5% - MA YRBS) **report having not gone to school because they felt they would be unsafe at school or on their way to or from school** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey. There was little variation by grade or gender.
- **2.8%** of all respondents (3.5% - 2007) **report having been threatened or injured by someone with a weapon such as a gun, knife, or club on school property during the school day** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey. There was very little variation by grade Male respondents (4.3%) were more likely to have had this experience than were females (1.3%).
- **14.2%** of all respondents (12.5% - 2007) **report having ever been physically abused such as being kicked, punched, burned, or beaten by a parent or other adult who lives with them** (grade 9 – 16.1%, grade 10 – 13.9%, grade 11 – 11.3%, grade 12 – 15.5%) (females – 11.2%, males – 17.5%).
- **6.7%** of all respondents (6.8% - 2007) **report having ever been physically assaulted by someone they date or have dated.** Females were slightly more likely to have had this experience than males.

“During your life, how many times have you been physically assaulted by someone you date or have dated?”

“At least once”

	<u>Grade 9</u>	<u>Grade 10</u>	<u>Grade 11</u>	<u>Grade 12</u>	<u>Total</u>	2007 <u>Total</u>
Female	7.7%	7.9%	6.0%	7.8%	7.3%	8.7%
Male	2.9%	8.3%	8.1%	4.8%	6.0%	4.7%
Total	5.4%	8.1%	7.0%	6.4%	6.7%	6.8%

GAMBLING

- **26.1%** of all respondents (36.2% - 2007) **report having gambled at least once during the 12 months prior to the survey.** (Gambling includes betting on the lottery, bingo, sporting events, casino games, cards, or racing.) (grade 9 – 22.9%, grade 10 – 21.5%, grade 11 – 27.6%, grade 12 – 32.9%). Male respondents (37.3%) were much more likely to have done so than were females (15.9%). Further, **5.6%** of all respondents (5.9% - 2007) **report having spent at least one hour gambling online during the previous month.**

INTERNET USE

- **15.4%** of all respondents **report having been threatened, humiliated, or experienced hostile behavior from others through electronic communication in any form during the 12 months prior to the survey.** The incidence of this experience was highest in grade 10 (grade 9 – 14.3%, grade 10 – 19.1%, grade 11 – 13.6%, grade 12 – 14.6%) and was higher among females (females – 16.8%, males – 13.8%).
- **6.6%** of all respondents (8.2% - 2007) **report having ever gone to meet someone they have met over the internet that they never knew before** (grade 9 – 5.0%, grade 10 – 7.4%, grade 11 – 8.9%, grade 12 – 5.2%). There was little variation by gender.
- **19.7%** of all respondents **report having sent or received sexually explicit messages or photos electronically (also called sexting) during the 12 months prior to the survey.** The incidence of this behavior increased slightly each year by grade (grade 9 – 16.5%, grade 10 – 18.3%, grade 11 – 21.4%, grade 12 – 23.2%). There was little variation by gender.

STRESS/DEPRESSION

- **30.4%** of all respondents **report that they feel like they are under too much stress most of the time or always** (grade 9 – 22.2%, grade 10 – 27.2%, grade 11 – 38.5%, grade 12 – 34.6%). Female respondents (39.2%) report that they feel they are under too much stress most of the time or always much more frequently than males (20.7%).
- **8.0%** of all respondents (8.8% - 2007) **report that they feel hopeless or discouraged about the future most of the time or always** (grade 9 – 6.1%, grade 10 – 8.9%, grade 11 – 8.6%, grade 12 – 8.5%). There was little variation by gender (females – 8.9%, males – 7.0%).
- **14.9%** of all respondents (15.7% - 2007) (17% - MA YRBS) **report having hurt him or herself on purpose** (cuts, burns, bruises) at least once during the previous 12 months. The incidence of this behavior was lowest in grade 9 (grade 9 – 13.3%, grade 10 – 15.9%, grade 11 – 16.4%, grade 12 – 14.2%). Female respondents (18.3%) were more likely to have hurt themselves on purpose than were males (11.2%).

SUICIDE

- **9.8%** of all respondents (8.7% - 2007) (13% - MA YRBS) **report having seriously considered attempting suicide** during the twelve months prior to the survey (grade 9 – 8.6%, grade 10 – 11.3%, grade 11 – 12.5%, grade 12 – 6.5%). There was no variation by gender.
- **3.2%** of all respondents (3.3% - 2007) (8% - MA YRBS) **report having actually attempted suicide** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey. There was no variation by gender.

“During the past 12 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide?”

“At least once”

	<u>Grade 9</u>	<u>Grade 10</u>	<u>Grade 11</u>	<u>Grade 12</u>	<u>Total</u>	2007 MA <u>YRBS</u>
Female	5.6%	4.0%	3.8%	0.8%	3.6%	9%
Male	2.2%	1.7%	4.0%	2.9%	2.7%	6%
Total	3.9%	2.9%	3.9%	1.7%	3.2%	8%

TOBACCO USE

- **Nearly one-third (31.9%)** of all respondents **report having ever tried cigarette smoking, even just a puff**. The incidence of those having ever tried cigarettes was highest in grade 12 (grade 9 – 14.5%, grade 10 – 21.1%, grade 11 – 43.8%, grade 12 – 52.2%) (females – 31.3%, males – 32.4%). Further, **9.7%** of all respondents (7.8% - 2007) (12% - MA YRBS) **report having smoked a whole cigarette for the first time before the age of 13**.
- **15.9%** of all respondents (17.1% - 2007) (18% - MA YRBS) **report having smoked cigarettes on at least one day during the thirty days prior to the survey**. There was little variation by gender.

“During the past 30 days, on how many days did you smoke cigarettes?”

“At least once”

	<u>Grade 9</u>	<u>Grade 10</u>	<u>Grade 11</u>	<u>Grade 12</u>	<u>Total</u>
Female	5.6%	10.2%	22.6%	22.0%	14.9%
Male	4.4%	10.0%	28.0%	28.6%	17.0%
Total	5.0%	10.1%	25.2%	25.0%	15.9%

- **5.3%** of all respondents (6.2% - 2007) (7% - MA YRBS) **report having smoked cigarettes on school property** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey (grade 9 – 2.8%, grade 10 – 4.9%, grade 11 – 8.5%, grade 12 – 5.2%) (females – 4.5%, males – 6.2%).
- **One respondent in ten (10.3%)** (10.7% - 2007) (15% - MA YRBS) **reports having smoked cigars, cigarillos, or little cigars** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey. Respondents from grade 10 (5.3%) were less likely to have done so than were those from the other grades (grade 9 – 6.4%, grade 11 – 14.7%, grade 12 – 15.5%). Males (15.8%) were much more likely to have done so than were females (5.3%).

ALCOHOL USE

- **36.3%** of all respondents (47.1% - 2007) (46% - MA YRBS) **report having had at least one drink of alcohol on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey.** The incidence of recent alcohol use increased each year by grade.

“During the past 30 days, on how many days did you have at least one drink of alcohol?”

“At least once”

	<u>Grade 9</u>	<u>Grade 10</u>	<u>Grade 11</u>	<u>Grade 12</u>	<u>Total</u>
Female	13.3%	32.3%	44.4%	63.0%	37.5%
Male	17.6%	30.8%	40.0%	56.2%	35.0%
Total	15.4%	31.6%	42.2%	59.9%	36.3%

- **21.1%** of all respondents (30.0% - 2007) (28% - MA YRBS) **report having had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row** (within a couple of hours) on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey. The incidence of binge drinking increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 5.7%, grade 10 – 15.8%, grade 11 – 26.4%, grade 12 – 39.7%). Males (22.6%) were slightly more likely to have done so than were females (19.8%).
- **3.9%** of all respondents (4.5% - 2007) **report having had at least one drink of alcohol during the school day** on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey (grade 9 – 1.4%, grade 10 – 4.0%, grade 11 – 6.2%, grade 12 – 4.3%). There was no variation by gender.
- **One-third (33.2%)** of all respondents (39.9% - 2007) **report having attended parties held in homes in Arlington where alcohol use by teens is allowed**, either occasionally or frequently during the 12 months prior to the survey. The incidence of this experience increased steadily each year by grade (grade 9 – 11.8%, grade 10 – 31.1%, grade 11 – 40.7%, grade 12 – 52.8%). There was no variation by gender.
- When asked their perception about how many students at their grade level in their school had used alcohol during the previous month, **21.5% believed that over three-quarters of their peers had done so** and another **38.6% (total of 60.1%) believed that over half had done so.** In fact, **36.3% of all responses actually report having used alcohol during the previous month.**

ILLEGAL DRUG USE

- **Nearly one-fourth (24.4%)** of all respondents (28.6% - 2007) (25% - MA YRBS) **report having used marijuana** at least once during the thirty days prior to the survey. Further, **6.8%** of all respondents (7.1% - 2007) **report having used marijuana on at least one occasion during the thirty days prior to the survey on school property** during the school day.

“During the past 30 days, how many times did you use marijuana?”

“At least once”

	<u>Grade 9</u>	<u>Grade 10</u>	<u>Grade 11</u>	<u>Grade 12</u>	<u>Total</u>
Female	4.9%	12.2%	30.1%	42.6%	22.1%
Male	12.4%	16.1%	37.6%	45.6%	26.9%
Total	8.5%	14.1%	33.7%	44.0%	24.4%

- **8.7%** all respondents (7.6% - 2007) **report having ever sniffed glue, or breathed the contents of spray cans, or inhaled any paints or sprays to get high.** There was little variation by grade and no variation by gender.
- **4.5%** all respondents (5.4% - 2007) (9% - MA YRBS) **report having ever used any form of cocaine, including powder, crack, or freebase.** The incidence of lifetime cocaine use was lowest in grade 9 (grade 9 – 2.2%, grade 10 – 3.4%, grade 11 – 6.2%, grade 12 – 6.5%) and had little variation by gender (females – 3.6%, males – 5.5%).
- **4.6%** all respondents (5.2% - 2007) **report having ever used oxycontin** (grade 9 – 2.2%, grade 10 – 3.8%, grade 11 – 6.6%, grade 12 – 6.1%). There was no variation by gender.
- **6.5%** all respondents **report having ever used any illegal drug such as PCP, mushrooms, LSD (acid), or any other hallucinogen.** The incidence of this behavior was highest in grade 12 (grade 9 – 2.9%, grade 10 – 5.5%, grade 11 – 7.0%, grade 12 – 11.4%). There was little variation by gender.
- **16.8%** of all respondents (22.0% - 2007) **report having been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property during the school day** on at least one occasion during the twelve months prior to the survey (grade 9 – 14.4%, grade 10 – 15.1%, grade 11 – 19.5%, grade 12 – 18.3%). Male respondents (20.6%) were more likely to have been offered, sold, or given an illegal drug on school property than were females (13.3%).

HIV/AIDS EDUCATION

- **45.2%** of all respondents (56.4% - 2007) **report having not had any conversation at all with their parents or other adults in their family about sexuality or ways to prevent HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases, or pregnancy during the 12 months prior to the survey** (grade 9 – 39.3%, grade 10 – 46.6%, grade 11 – 51.6%, grade 12 – 43.9%). Male respondents (53.5%) report not having had such conversations more frequently than females (37.8%).

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

- **24.7%** of all respondents (28.4% - 2007) (44% - MA YRBS) **report having ever had sexual intercourse**. Further, **2.7%** of all respondents (3.6% - 2007) (6% - MA YRBS) **report having had sexual intercourse for the first time before the age of 13**.

“Have you ever had sexual intercourse?”

“Yes”

	<u>Grade 9</u>	<u>Grade 10</u>	<u>Grade 11</u>	<u>Grade 12</u>	<u>Total</u>
Female	8.4%	17.9%	28.6%	39.1%	23.1%
Male	17.0%	17.7%	26.0%	49.5%	26.5%
Total	12.6%	17.8%	27.3%	43.7%	24.7%

- **4.7%** of all respondents (6.9% - 2007) (12% - MA YRBS) **report having had sexual intercourse with four or more partners** during their lives. 12th grade respondents (7.9%) were most likely to have done so and 9th graders (2.9%) were least likely. Males (6.8%) report having had four or more sexual partners more frequently than females (2.9%).
- **17.2%** of all respondents (21.4% - 2007) (33% - MA YRBS) **report having had sexual intercourse on at least one occasion during the three months prior to the survey** (grade 9 – 9.7%, grade 10 – 11.5%, grade 11 – 19.3%, grade 12 – 30.2%) (females – 16.0%, males – 18.7%).
- **33.5%** of all respondents (38.5% - 2007) **report having ever participated in oral sex, either given or received**. The incidence of this behavior increased each year by grade (grade 9 – 17.1%, grade 10 – 26.4%, grade 11 – 40.9%, grade 12 – 52.2%). There was little variation by gender (females – 32.6%, males – 34.5%).
- **5.8%** of all respondents (7.0% - 2007) **report that they drank alcohol or used other drugs before having had sexual intercourse the last time**. Respondents from grades 11 (8.2%) and grade 12 (11.0%) were more likely to have done so than were their younger peers (grade 9 – 1.4%, grade 10 – 3.4%). Male respondents (7.2%) report having done so slightly more frequently than female respondents (4.6%).

DIETARY BEHAVIOR

- **14.8%** of all respondents **report that they are concerned about their weight either most of the time or always.** The incidence of this concern was highest in grade 11 (grade 9 – 9.1%, grade 10 – 13.5%, grade 11 – 19.4%, grade 12 – 17.8%). Female respondents (20.8%) report being concerned about their weight much more frequently than males (8.3%).
- During the thirty days prior to the survey, in order to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight:
 - **2.2%** of all respondents (2.7% - 2007) (6% - MA YRBS) **report having taken diet pills, powders, or liquids without a doctor's advice.** (females – 2.3%, males – 2.1%)
 - **4.4%** of all respondents (3.1% - 2007) (5% - MA YRBS) **report having vomited or taken laxatives.** (females – 5.3%, males – 3.4%)

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- **60.1%** of all respondents (61.2% - 2007) **report having exercised or participated in physical activities for at least 20 minutes on at least three days during the week prior to the survey.** The incidence of this behavior decreased each year by grade (grade 9 – 67.0%, grade 10 – 60.5%, grade 11 – 60.4%, grade 12 – 51.3%). Male respondents (68.2%) were more likely to have exercised regularly than were females (52.9%).
- **36.1%** of all respondents (43.8% - 2007) **report that they spend 3 hours or more per day in front of a screen (i.e., computer, video games, television) not including homework on an average school day.** The incidence of this behavior was lowest in grade 9 (grade 9 – 29.9%, grade 10 – 37.5%, grade 11 – 38.9%, grade 12 – 38.3%). Male respondents (39.5%) were more likely to do so than were females (32.9%).

HELPING RESOURCES

- When asked which resource they would prefer for access to contraception and counseling, **30.1% responded “a family physician”, 23.5% responded “a school-based clinic”, and 15.9% responded “a local health clinic”.**
- **89.0%** of all respondents (88.5% - 2007) **report that they have someone in their life who really listens to them.** There was very little variation by grade while females (92.4%) report this experience somewhat more than males (85.2%).

APPENDIX

THE 2009 YOUTH RISK BEHAVIOR SURVEY

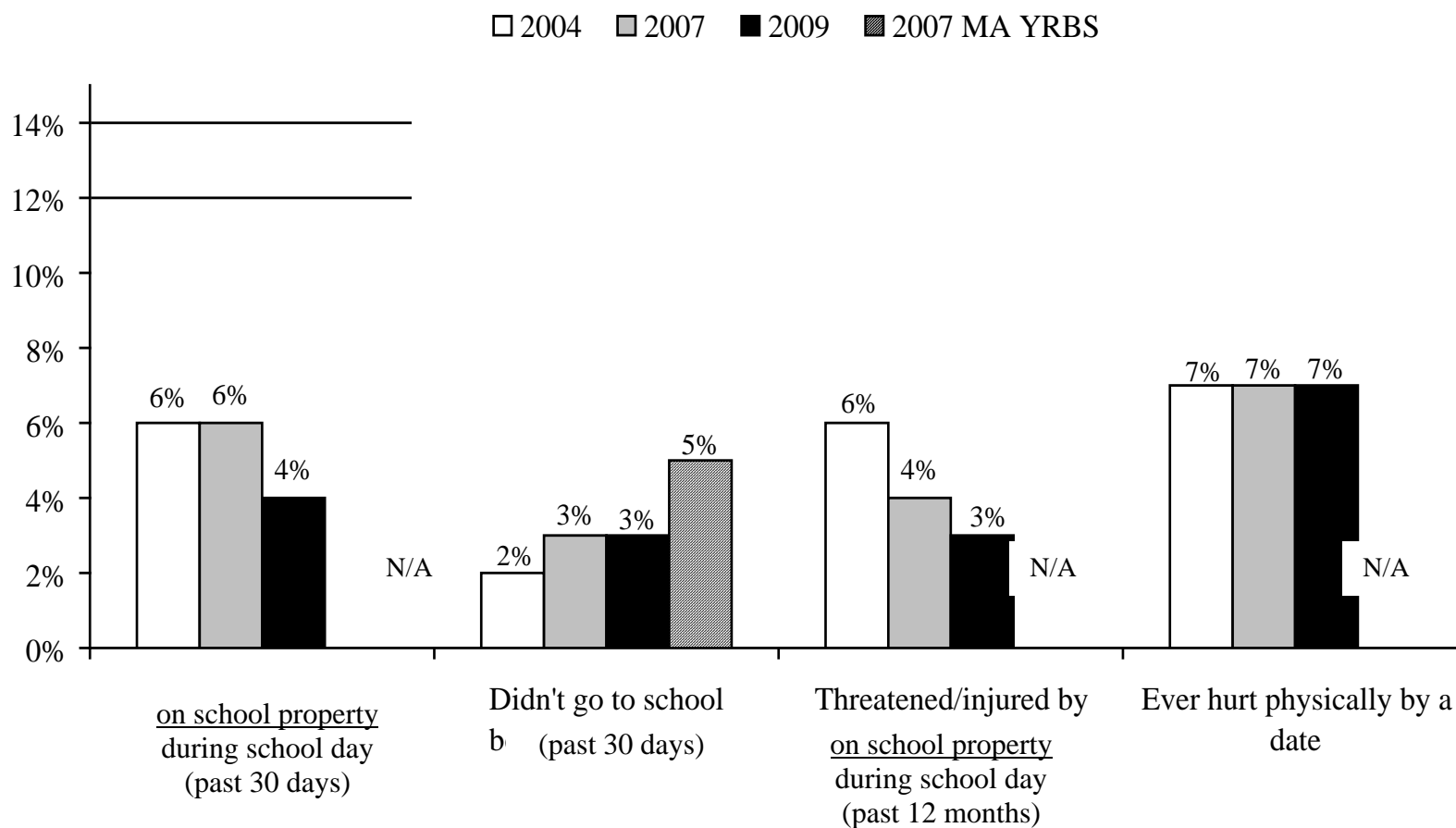
FOR THE

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

GRADES 9, 10, 11, AND 12

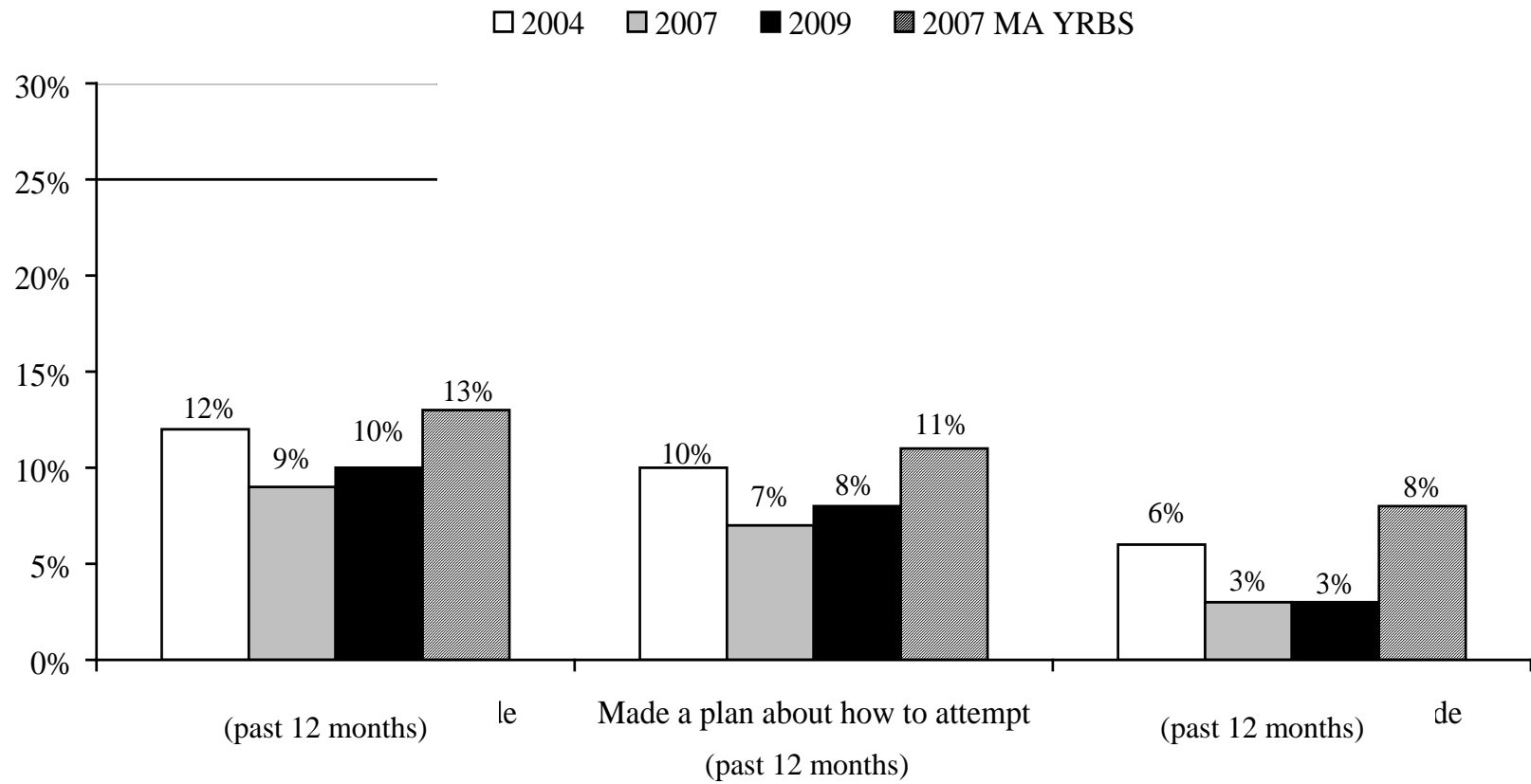
2009 YRBS
ARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
(GRADES 9 THROUGH 12 - COMBINED)

VIOLENCE RELATED BEHAVIORS

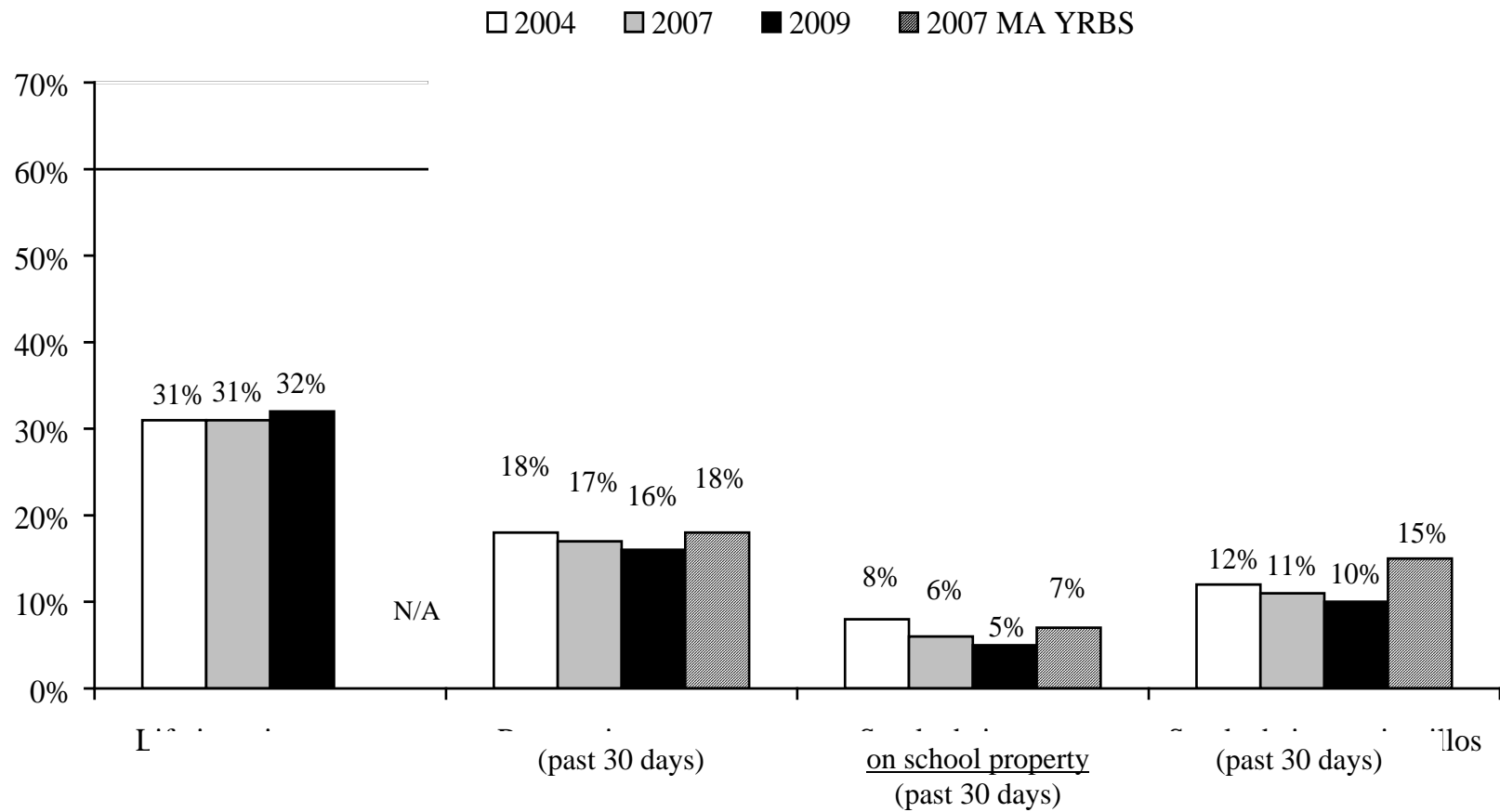


2009 YRBS
ARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
(GRADES 9 THROUGH 12 - COMBINED)

SUICIDE

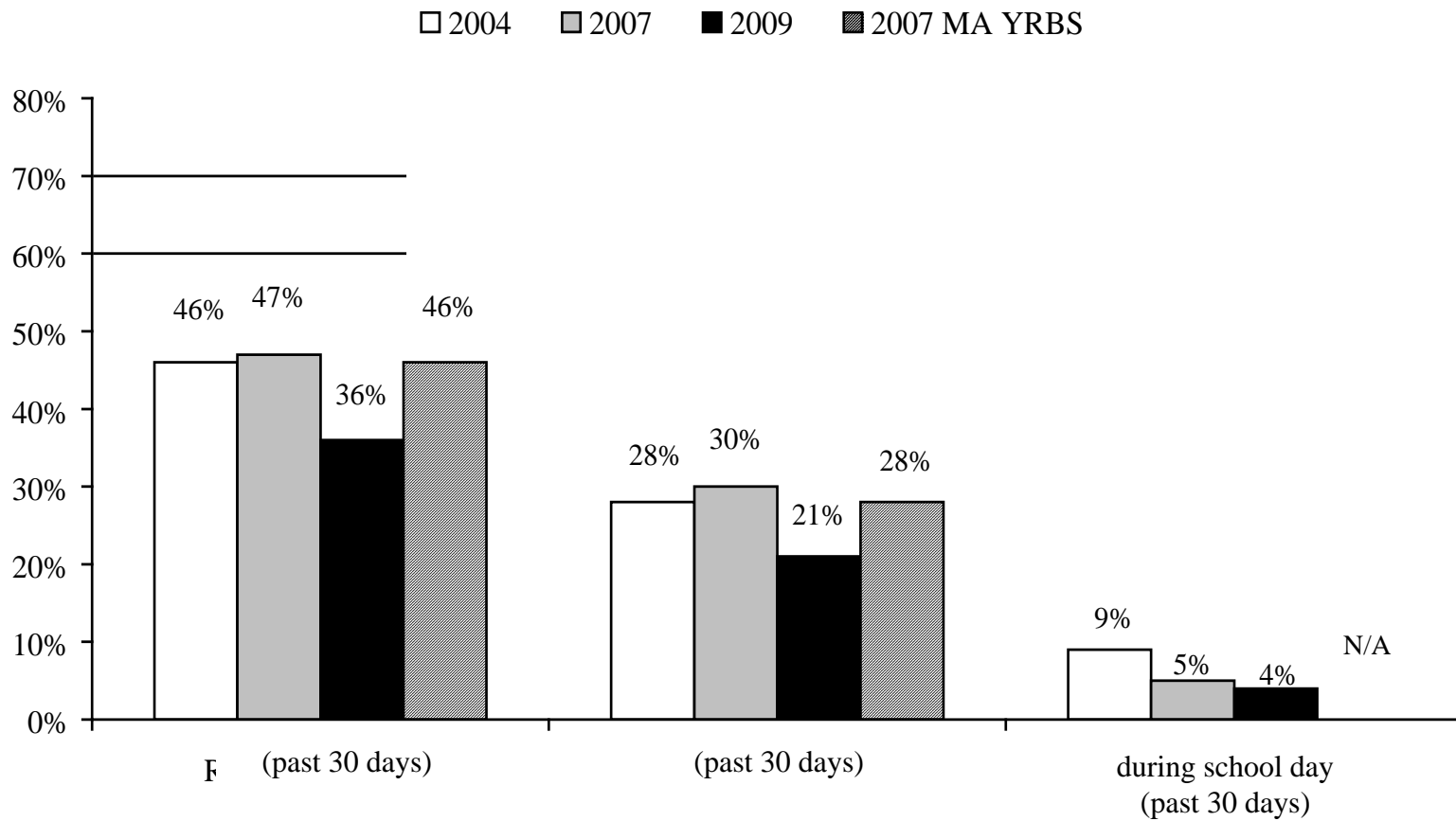


2009 YRBS
ARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
(GRADES 9 THROUGH 12 - COMBINED)
TOBACCO USE



2009 YRBS
ARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
(GRADES 9 THROUGH 12 - COMBINED)

ALCOHOL USE

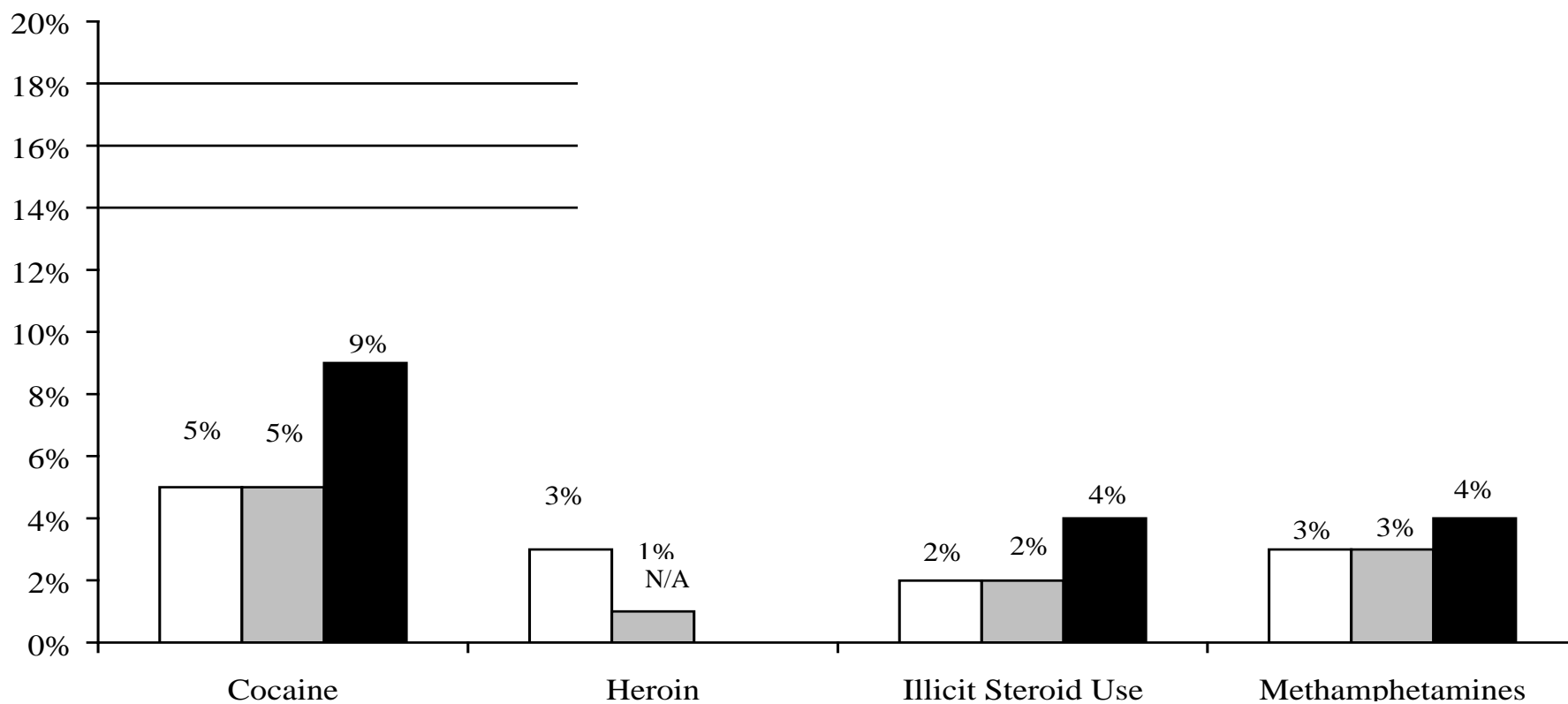


**2009 YRBS
ARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
(GRADES 9 THROUGH 12 - COMBINED)**

ILLEGAL DRUG USE

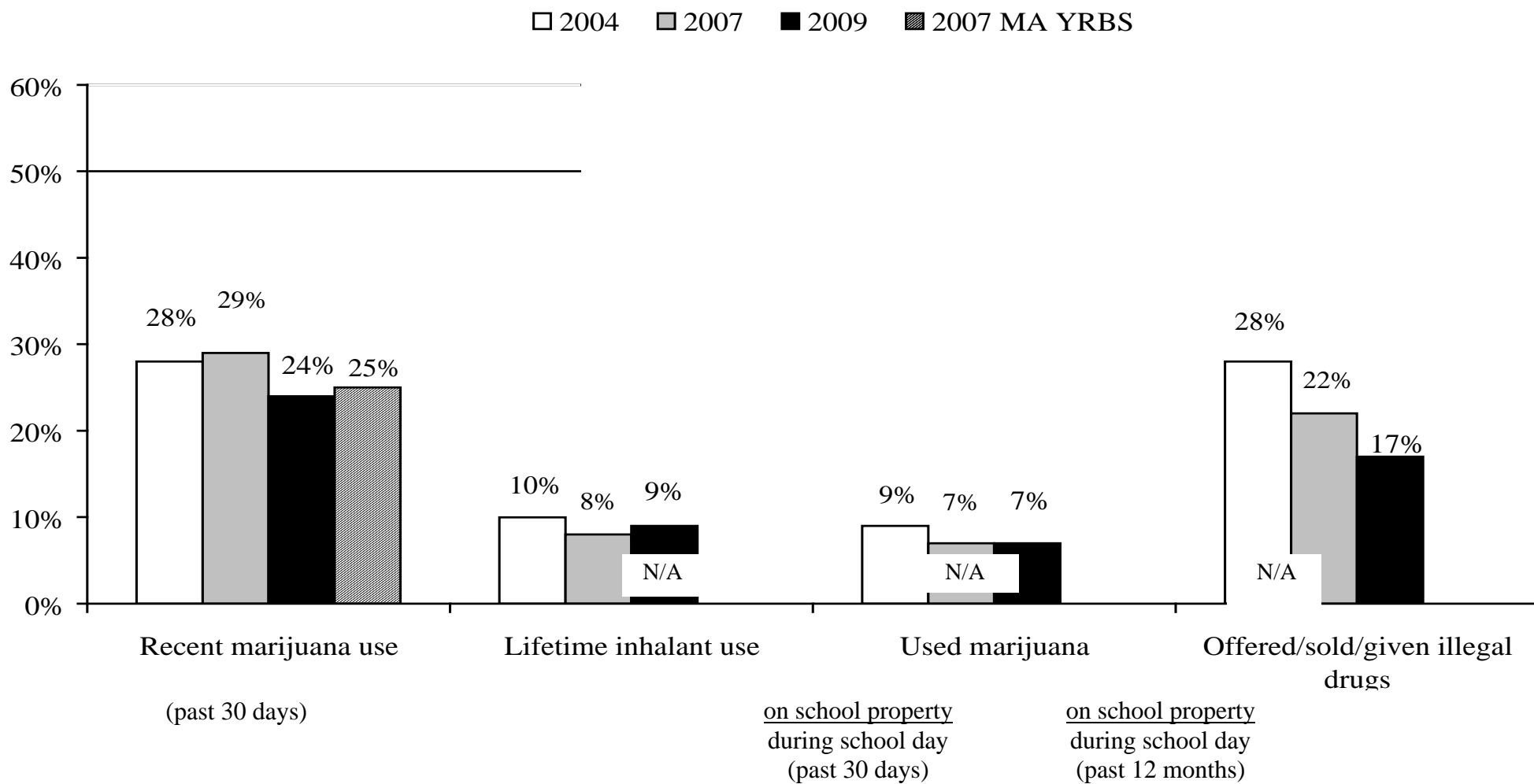
Lifetime use (ever used)
(at least once)

□ 2007 ■ 2009 ■ 2007 MA YRBS



**2009 YRBS
ARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
(GRADES 9 THROUGH 12 - COMBINED)**

ILLEGAL DRUG USE



2009 YRBS
ARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL
(GRADES 9 THROUGH 12 - COMBINED)

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

